

Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs — Division of Museums and History

# NEVADA STATE MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXXI, NUMBER 3

AUGUST 2003

A Fund Raiser for the Museum . . .

## Carson City Mint Coin Show September 6 and 7

The famous Carson City Mint once again serves as the site of one of the most prestigious and successful coin shows west of the Mississippi. Amateur and professional coin collectors will converge on the museum in Carson City for the 9th Annual Carson City Mint Coin Show. The show runs Saturday, September 6 through Sunday, September 7, 2003 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2.50 for seniors, and free for children 17 and under. Become a museum member and receive free admission to all Nevada state museums.

The coin show offers an excellent opportunity for people who want to better understand the history and significance of coins and the hobby of coin collecting. Many collectors travel to Carson City just to attend the show, and various coin clubs come on chartered buses. In past years, the show attracted coin clubs from the Central Valley of California and Oregon.

This is also a good time for people to find out the value of their old coins and currency. Forty dealers from across the western half of the United States attend the show offering visitors Carson City minted silver dollars along with rare domestic and foreign coins, paper notes and currency, historical documents, tokens, gaming chips, stamps, books, jewelry, collecting supplies and many other unique gift ideas. Most of the dealers offer free appraisals, and buy and sell coins during show hours.

Visitors of all ages can also discover and learn the art of gold panning and watch museum volunteers Ken and Karen Hopple operate the historic Coin Press No. 1, within the former mint building. Commemorative medallions will be available for purchase.

This year's prizes are a woman's coin watch, a man's coin watch, and a unique and wonderful photograph of the Carson City U.S. Branch Mint, taken around 1895. The photograph holds a Morgan Silver Dollar with a "CC" mint mark along with two silver medallions with "CC" mint marks. The prizes are now on display upon entering the museum. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00

To obtain information on the coin show, contact the show coordinator Kathi Baker at 775-687-4810, ext. 222, or e-mail at [kjbaker@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:kjbaker@clan.lib.nv.us).

### *Scenes from the 2002 Coin Show*



*Photos by Sue Ann Monteleone*



The *Nevada State Museum Newsletter* is published quarterly in February, May, August and November by the Friends of the NSM, for the benefit of museum members. This issue edited by Jack Gibson. Printed by Capitol City Press, Carson City. Please address all communications to Newsletter, Nevada State Museum, 600 N. Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701.

The museum is an agency of the

**State of Nevada**

Kenny Guinn

Governor

**Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs**

Scott K. Sisco

Interim Department Director

**Division of Museums and History**

Administrator

Vacant

**Nevada State Museum**

Jim Barmore

Museum Director

Become a member and support the Nevada State Museum. Membership includes free admission to all seven state museums, a 15% discount in all museum stores, the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, newsletters, and selected invitations to exhibit openings, educational programs, and events.

- Individual ..... \$35
- Family ..... \$50
- Sustaining ..... \$100
- Contributing ..... \$250
- Patron ..... \$500
- Benefactor ..... \$1000
- For seniors 65+ who simply want free admission and a 15% discount and not the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, a special senior membership is available at only ... \$20

Other facilities included in your membership are:

- Nevada State Historical Society, Reno
- Nevada State Museum & Historical Society, Las Vegas
- Lost City Museum, Overton
- Nevada State Railroad Museum, Carson City
- Nevada State Railroad Museum, Boulder City
- East Ely Railroad Depot Museum

# Views of the Past



This photograph is from the P.E. Larson Collection and can be viewed with other Larson photos on our Goldfield Past Perfect Virtual exhibit. The exhibit is on the Department of Cultural Affairs website under the Nevada State Museum Virtual Exhibits.

The photograph depicts an enforcement raid on a "high-grade" assay office in Gold-

field in 1907. Mine owners called upon law officers to help them eliminate "high grading," an abuse whereby literally millions of dollars worth of high-grade ore was stolen by miners. They concealed the gold on their persons, in their clothing and tools and carried it out of the mines. This particular action as one of the largest raids in Goldfield history.

## Recent Museum Minting Operations

The Nevada State Museum completed its first year from June 2002 to June 2003 operating historic Coin Press No. 1, after a lengthy shut down due to mechanical problems. During this period, museum volunteers Ken and Karen Hopple minted 3,669 silver and 5,380 brass medallions. The total mintage for the year came to 9,049.

The museum minted medallions for the following organizations: Jeanne Dini Yerington 2003, Nevada Gaming Commission, Nevada Judicial Historical Society, Nevada State Engineers Office 1903-2003, and the centennial medallion for the city of Reno 1903-2002.

In 2003 the museum released a new medallion in its own series commemorating discovery of the central Nevada mining town of Goldfield 1902-2002. Medallions available

in the museum series include the Nevada State Capitol building, Lost City Museum,

Cultural Center, Nevada State Legislature in the Carson City Mint, the Pony Express, State Seal, and the Virginia and Truckee Railroad. All can be purchased at the Museum Store.

The Hopples operate the coin press the last Friday of each month. For additional information on minting operations at the museum please contact Bob Nylen at 775-687-4810 extension 239.

### Minting Totals April - June 2003

April: 300 silver and 838 brass medallions.

May: 1007 silver and 578 brass medallion.

June: 51 silver and 320 brass medallions.

Totals: 1358 silver and 1736 brass medallions minted.

**Remember: Coin Show  
September 6 & 7  
At the Museum**

## 40 et 8 French Boxcar on Exhibit in Loftin Park

The French Merci Train 40 et 8 boxcar is now on exhibit in Loftin Park at the Nevada State Museum through the end of August. It was fully restored at the Nevada State Railroad Museum during the past year. These cars were used to transport troops during World War I and II, carrying 40 men or 8 horses, hence the name. In 1949 France sent 49 cars, one for each state and one for Hawaii and Washington D.C., filled with gifts donated by the French people in gratitude for aid American citizens sent at the close of World War II. The Nevada car arrived in Carson City on February 23, 1949 and the State has kept the gifts at the NSM for all these years. A sample of the many gifts will be on exhibit inside the museum.—Photo by Sue Ann Monteleone



### *Message From Our Director Jim Barmore*

A museum without a plan is like a ship without a rudder. We know this is true, so division staff, museum staff, and volunteers invested considerable effort in articulating a strategic plan for the museum. The plan was finalized at the end of December 2002. Now six months later, we are reviewing progress and adjusting our steering to stay the course.

The strategic plan was an outcome of a participatory process involving the division administrator, directors from other museums in the division, Nevada State Museum staff, volunteers, members, visitors, and general public. Planning activities included the American Association of Museums Museum Assessment Program and Accreditation Program, planning sessions, museum consultants, and audience surveys.

The plan identifies near-term and long-term strategies for addressing critical issues over the next five years. The planning process determined seven critical issues, listed in order of priority.

1. Audience Development
2. Resource Development
3. Collection Development
4. Facility and Equipment Development
5. Resource Management
6. Collaboration
7. Professional Development

We care deeply about the museum. We are driven by high standards. But the museum faces tremendous demands and expectations with limited resources. In some cases, resources are declining. Our strategic plan helps us stay on course. For a complete copy, please call me at (775) 687-4810 ext. 226 or [jbarmore@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:jbarmore@clan.lib.nv.us).

### Tin Cup Tea Set For Sept. 13

By JAN LOVERIN

Curator of Textiles and Clothing

Governor and Mrs. Kenny Guinn are once again hosting the Tin Cup Tea, a western themed BBQ at the Governor's Mansion on September 13. This annual event benefits the Nevada State Museum and the Keck Museum at the University of Nevada, Reno.

This event is the largest fund-raiser for the museum with a portion of the proceeds going to the Marjorie Russell Center. This year the center was able to have three fans restored. Fans are a very fragile complex museum object. According to Sandra L. Troon, conservator at the Oregon Textile Workshop, "Fan conservation is a particular challenge because fans are fragile, three dimensional, constructed of multiple materials and often have moveable or foldable parts."

Ms. Troon is repairing three fans from the Nevada State Museum collection; a brise style feather fan; a painted silk folding fan with ivory sticks; a painted silk and lace folding fan. Ms. Troon states, that "the conservation treatment has taken place over a period of several months and each fan required a minimum of 10 hours to examine, research, document, and stabilize."

In addition to the display of fans, the Center will once again be displaying the First Ladies Inaugural Ball gowns. The gowns were previously displayed three years ago. Since that time the museum has acquired the Una Dickerson gown from 1910 and two gowns from Idelle Balzar from 1927 and 1931.

The Tin Cup Tea has been a most popular event with over five hundred people attending. This year organizers from both institutions are hoping for at least six hundred people. For more information, please call the museum at 687-4810 ext. 222.

# Natural History Spotlights:

# CHIPMUNKS

By **GEORGE D. BAUMGARDNER, Ph.D.**  
NSM Curator of Natural History

Chipmunks are little squirrels that are generally seen as they dart about on the ground or when they pause, frequently on an elevated spot, to “chirp” a protest at someone whose presence apparently bothers them. These animals can be quite colorful and have fur that is shades of red, orange, brown, white, gray, and black. Chipmunks from western North America have three to five dark stripes and four pale stripes across the width of their backs that extend from their heads to near their tails. These stripes help camouflage the animal. Species that live in areas with dense brush, where the shadows of twigs are weak and unclear, have stripes on their backs that are somewhat blurry. Chipmunks living in sunlit, open forests, where the shadows of twigs are dark and sharply defined, have back stripes that are likewise distinct.

Individual chipmunks can, presumably, recognize fellow members of their own species; however, it can be very difficult for people to tell them apart. Even trained and experienced biologists can have a hard time identifying the different chipmunk species using external characteristics. It is frequently necessary for biologists to examine internal anatomy and genetics of a chipmunk to confirm its identity. Only a few other animals in Nevada might be confused with chipmunks. Young Golden-mantled Ground Squirrels are of similar size and color as chipmunks but the former have fewer back stripes and no facial stripes. [Adult golden-mantled ground squirrels are much larger than chipmunks.] Antelope Squirrels are close to the size of chipmunks but are much lighter in color (silver, tan, gray, or pinkish), have fewer back stripes, and lack cheek stripes. In addition, antelope squirrels have a white rump patch lacking in chipmunks. The stripes on both of these look-alikes are near the sides of these animals. The differences among these species can be readily seen in exhibits in the natural history gallery of the Nevada State Museum.

Most Nevada chipmunks spend the majority of their time on the ground and sometimes climb in bushes and lower tree limbs; however, some species are more arboreal and regularly climb trees. Unlike many tree squirrels and ground squirrels, which put on considerable weight before winter and hibernate for extensive periods, chipmunks gain only a little extra weight and hibernate for shorter times. They are thought to rouse between hibernation bouts to eat seeds cached in their dens. This tendency to intermittently hibernate is probably why chipmunks are occasionally seen above ground during the milder portions of winter. Their ability to reduce activity through hibernation likely increases their life span. Some chipmunks live five or more years, which is a rather long time for a rodent of this size. All chipmunks have a similar diet of seeds, nuts, vegetation, insects, meat, and fungi. Food items that are not immediately eaten may be carried back to their dens for storage. One such cache contained at least 35,000 seeds from 20 different plant species. Transportation of food is made easier by their cheek pouches. These structures are pockets of skin (one in each cheek) that open inside their mouths. When these pouches are stuffed with food, a chipmunk’s face can look twice its normal width. This gives



**Young chipmunk from the Pine Nut Mountains east of Dayton, Nevada. While searching for a good spot to photograph these animals, I nearly stepped on this little guy. Because of its young age, it was probably naive enough not to recognize me as a potential threat and allowed me near enough for this picture. As it grows older, assuming it grows older, this animal should become more wary.**

them the puffy-cheeked look sometimes seen in their photos. [Not only does this make for a cuter picture, which is easier to sell, but it indicates the photographer likely baited the animal in to get it close enough for a good image.]

There are nine species of chipmunks living in Nevada. Some occur at only a few isolated sites but others live in a good many areas scattered across the state. Most Nevada chipmunks inhabit coniferous forests (i.e. juniper, pinyon pine, other pines, fir) in mountainous regions; however, one species also lives in brushy areas of the desert. These animals avoid heavily urbanized situations but will occupy parks and homes having natural vegetation.

The Least Chipmunk (*Tamias minimus*) has the most extensive range for a chipmunk in Nevada and is evenly distributed over much of the northern two-thirds of the state. This comparatively broad distribution probably reflects its wider tolerance for heat and solar radiation compared to other chipmunks. The least chipmunk is the only western chipmunk that is not restricted to living in the vicinity of coniferous trees. It is quite common in sagebrush and greasewood areas of lower elevation deserts and also occupies sagebrush sites in forests at higher elevations. Most of these animals that I have seen have been in lower elevation deserts; however, I recently saw one at nearly 6,000 feet elevation among pinyon pine and sagebrush in the Pine Nut Mountains. This animal gets its common name from being the smallest of chipmunks. It weighs 1 to 2½ ounces (30-70 grams) and is 2¾ to 4½ inches (70 to 114 mm) in length. This species is the only chipmunk that can be seen in the brushy areas immediately around Carson City.

The Panamint Chipmunk (*Tamias panamintinus*) is another western Nevada chipmunk about which I recently made some interesting discoveries. According to the books “Mammals of Nevada” and “The Mammals of North America” (E. R. Hall 1946 & 1981; respectively) this species occupies a number of mountain ranges along the southwestern border of Nevada. Unlike the least chipmunk, panamint chipmunk populations are more isolated from one another. (Continued on page 5)

# Chipmunks

(Continued from page 4)

This species prefers rocky areas surrounded by pinyon and/or juniper trees and seems restricted to such habitats as it will not enter brushlands at lower elevations nor will it live in the forests of larger pine and fir trees on taller mountains.

Compared to animals with continuous distributions, isolated populations of any organism have a greater possibility of being unique. It was, therefore, exciting for me to capture one of these animals in the Cedar Mountains 18 miles north-east of Mina, Nevada. Not only is this site about 30 miles northeast of the nearest record for this species from the Excelsior Mountains but, more interestingly, there is low elevation habitat between these two sites that is currently uninhabitable to these animals. Study of such populations can give clues to the nature of past environments and how such species adapt to change. The presence of this species here indicates that at some previous time the area toward the Excelsior Mountains likely had a habitat of coniferous trees. As the region became warmer and drier the vegetation of the lower desert changed and the chipmunks were trapped on the "habitat island" of the Cedar Mountains. [It is unlikely these animals got to the Cedar Mountains by adapting to the drier conditions because, if this were so, they should still be found in the lower elevation valleys between these mountain ranges.]

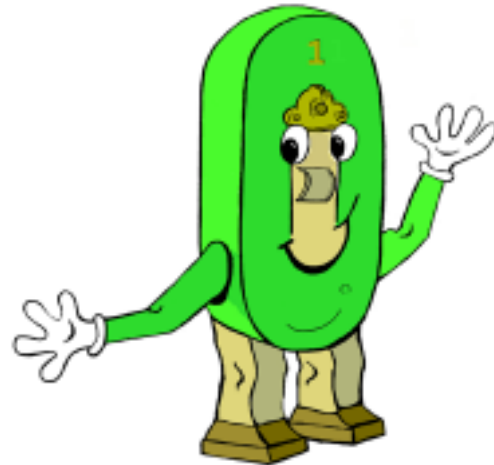
This Cedar Mountains population would be interesting to learn more about but it has been difficult to study. The first time I was in this area I caught only one chipmunk and saw no others. During a second, brief visit to this site I was unable to capture or see any more of these animals.

I recently learned of a second, far more easy to observe, population of panamint chipmunks. E. R. Hall knew in 1946 of a few specimens of this species from the southern portion of the Pine Nut Mountains, southeast of Carson City. At that time Hall suggested more study in these mountains; however, little additional work has been conducted in this area.

Last year, while traveling in these mountains east of Dayton, I caught glimpses of animals I was certain were chipmunks. These individuals looked rather large for least chipmunks but without much closer examination I could not identify them. Because of weather and time constraints I was unsuccessful in my efforts to capture these animals until this April when I found a site where they were rather easy to see. Like the Cedar Mountains animal, I believe these chipmunks to be *Tamias panamintinus* but I will send them to other experts to double-check my identification.

Since this species is known from the southern Pine Nut Mountains, its discovery some 20 miles further north in the same mountain range is not as biologically interesting as the more isolated population in the Cedar Mountains. Nevertheless, this second group of animals is much more accessible for study. While much can be learned from books, nothing can replace first-hand observation. In the short time since I found these chipmunks I have seen them climb on the side of a fairly smooth-surfaced building (indicating they are better climbers than one might conclude from popular accounts), caught an animal with a mouth full of sagebrush bark (something they probably use for bedding), and learned how to tell them from other small squirrels when they are moving (like most chipmunks, this species tends to hold its tail straight in the air as it runs). Watching this population has also allowed

# Exhibits Department Busy With Various Projects



On May 10 and 11 the Museum participated in the 38th annual Jackpot of Gem 2003 show at the Reno Livestock Events Center. The show is presented every year by the Reno Gem and Mineral Society. The exhibits program created a display featuring copper ore samples from the Judge Guild collection. A narrative described the Judge's lifelong interest in mining and his efforts towards the creation of the mine exhibit at the Nevada State Museum. This was a great opportunity for us to display minerals from our collections that are not regularly seen by the public. The exhibits program looks forward to displaying other minerals from the collections at next years show.

\* \* \*

In conjunction with *Under One Sky*, the J.W. Calhoun changing gallery is featuring the artwork of Melvin Brown. Melvin's artwork stands in sharp contrast from the more traditional Native American arts and crafts. The show features a wide variety of styles and techniques and spans many years of Melvin's life. Children of all ages may enjoy the found objects that Melvin has incorporated into the sculptures. The exhibit *too-who'-oo numa* will be on display through August 31, 2003.

\* \* \*

Meet the Press has been a project the exhibits team has been working on while developing new text for the Coin Press Gallery. Our hope was to create graphics that are inviting for children and adults to help them better understand what can be an intimidating machine. As a result, a cartoon version of Coin Press No. 1 was created. Thanks to the talents of our graphics designer Dorothy Nylen a wonderful illustration has taken on a life of its own and will tell the fascinating history of Coin Press No. 1. Look for a test version to appear in the Coin Press Gallery in the near future.

me to take the photo used in this article and afforded me a brief glimpse of an animal that may prove to be yet another squirrel not previously known from this area. This type of work adds to biological knowledge and provides interesting bits of information with which to personalize the interpretation the natural history of Nevada for the museum public.

If you wish to learn more about chipmunks or other plants or animals that live in Nevada feel free to contact us at the Nevada State Museum, 600 North Carson Street in Carson City.





Jack and Margie Gibson view the poster of State Museums that was on display at the Nevada State Legislature building.

—Photo by Bob Harmon

## Donated Displays Feature All Seven State Museums

Nevada State Museum volunteer Margie Gibson wants to make it easier for visitors to find information about all state museums. Working in the museum store, she often meets patrons who are unaware that other state museums even exist, much less what they have to offer.

“These are great museums and I don’t want anyone to miss out,” Margie said. “So I started looking for a way to put information from every museum in a place where visitors could see it.”

Margie approached then Exhibits Manager Doug Southerland and together they came up with the idea of creating a divisional display, complete with photos and a brochure rack, which could be placed in each of the state museums.

She talked the idea over with husband Jack. Knowing that budgets are tight but not wishing to lose a great opportunity for reaching visitors, the Gibsons decided to donate funding for the project.

Lost City Museum Exhibit Technician Thomas Cunningham completed the work on these colorful displays. One has been delivered to each museum, and extra were built for special events where promotional material will come in handy. One display was set up in the State Legislature during the Special Session.

Department of Cultural Affairs Interim Director Scott K. Sisco praised the Gibsons for coming up with a great idea and then providing the funds necessary to carry it out.

“Margie and Jack have a long history of giving to our state museums,” Sisco said. “Their seemingly endless commitment of time and energy, as well as extensive financial support, exemplifies the important role the private sector plays in supporting and enhancing public museums for the benefit of future generations. We truly can’t thank them enough.”—Bob Harmon, Department Public Information Officer

## Division Administrator Update

The search is on for a new Division of Museums and History Administrator. Former Administrator Marcia Wolter Britton was offered the opportunity to direct the Wyoming Council for the Humanities and left Nevada in June.

Department of Cultural Affairs’ Interim Director Scott K. Sisco said Wolter Britton’s collaborative spirit and dedication to public programming helped set the tone for division-wide planning.

“Marcia did much to solidify the division during her tenure here and leaves a strong foundation for us to carry on the work she started,” Sisco said.

The department launched a national recruitment drive for a new administrator and hopes to begin interviewing candidates sometime in July.—Bob Harmon, Department Public Information Officer

## Next Newsletter Deadline

The next deadline for the *Nevada State Museum Newsletter* will be Tuesday, October 7, for the November/January 2004 issue. Mailing will be made for delivery by October 31. Please address all communications to Newsletter, Nevada State Museum, 600 N. Carson St., Carson City, NV 89701.



A piece of deck planking from the USS Nevada and a photo of the ship were recently donated to the Nevada State Museum by Mr. Warren Day of Oregon. The plank was salvaged from the ship while at Bremerton, Washington just prior to its use as a target off Bikini Atoll in 1945. Mr. Day obtained the photograph from the U.S. Naval Institute, and the wood-burned etching on the plank was done by Millenia Wood of Olympia, Washington.—Photo by Sue Ann Monteleone



Nevada State Museum display at the Stewart Indian School.

—Photo by Alanah Woody

## NSM Helps at the Stewart Indian School Pow-wow

As a sign of *Under One Sky's* success, the Anthropology Program at the Nevada State Museum was invited by Sherrada James, Executive Director, Nevada Indian Commission, to participate in the Stewart Indian School Father's Day Pow-wow June 13-15, 2003. An information table was set up and manned for all three days of the pow-wow featuring the excellent new portable display designed and produced by the NSM exhibits program, an *Under One Sky* display as well as other NSM and Department of Cultural Affairs displays and information. The most popular museum display (once again) proved to be an assortment of historic photographs from Stewart, and alumni were able to make a valuable contribution by identifying people in the photographs. The Natural History Program also displayed stuffed animal skins labeled with their Native American names.

The Father's Day Pow-wow is a long-standing tradition at Stewart, but was cancelled in recent years. Last year's *Under One Sky* opening substituted for the event locally, with the assistance of the Stewart alumni Association. This year, the Nevada Indian Commission and Stewart Alumni Association joined forces to host the event in an effort to resurrect this tradition at Stewart. In addition, the Nevada Indian Commission, with support from the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, Stewart Alumni and interested supporters of the school, is planning to reopen the Stewart Indian School Museum, which has been closed since May 2001.

The Nevada State Museum currently has the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Stewart collection in storage until the reopening of the Stewart Museum. Objects from their collection are displayed in *Under One Sky*. The pow-wow was the first step in a fund-raising effort that is hoped will result in the reopening of the Stewart Indian School Museum and a new Cultural Center. The Nevada State Museum and the anthropology program are pleased to assist where possible in this important effort.—Alanah Woody and Gene Hattori, NSM

## Backstage Tours

Public response to the museum's Archaeological Awareness & Historic Preservation Week "Behind the Scenes Tour" of Anthropology's collection area last May was overwhelming. All tours up filled early, and the overflow accommodated by continuing the tour into June. We will continue providing group tours on a monthly basis, but reservations are required due to cramped quarters in the museum's basement. Call Roz Works at 775.687.4810 ext.

## Coming Events

### NEVADA STATE MUSEUM

**August 26:** *The Historic Mining Town of Belmont* by Robert A. Nylen, Curator of History.

**September 23:** *Bodie and Western Nevada Mining Camps*, by Stanley Paher, Nevada Historian and Publisher.

**October 28:** To be announced.

These programs are part of the Museum's Frances Humphrey evening lecture series held on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. There is no charge for the programs. The Loftin Park entrance on the north side of the museum complex will be used for all programs. For more information call 687-4810, ext. 239.

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### NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

**August 13:** Movie in the Park, TBA.

**September 10:** *Western Railroad Adventures: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* by Mark McLaughlin.

**October 15:** *90 Miles South and 50 Years Back* by Kel Aiken.

Programs at the Nevada State Railroad Museum are held in the Interpretive Center at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, and are sponsored by the Friends of the Museum. Admission is free.

## Photo From the Past



A scene from the 2002 Coin Show at the Nevada State Museum. This will be repeated for two days on September 6 and 7 this year.